



# News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

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## STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENT ISSUES WARNING ON LEAD-CONTAMINATED CANDY FROM MEXICO

SACRAMENTO - Consumers should avoid eating tamarind candy lollypops labeled Dulmex brand "Bolirindo" because this product and its wrapper contain excessively high levels of lead, State Health Director Diana M. Bontá, R.N., Dr.P.H., warned today. The product is manufactured in Mexico.

"Lead is toxic to humans, especially infants, young children and pregnant women, in both short- and long-term exposures," said Bontá. "Lead can cause damage to the central nervous system, resulting in learning disabilities, behavioral disorders and other problems that could last a lifetime."

The product consists of a soft, dark brown, tamarind fruit candy lollypop on a white or orange-striped stick. The orange-red wrapper, with "BOLIRINDO" in white lettering and a figure of brown tamarind fruit, contains orange-red colored lead oxide pigment that may contaminate the



*Tamarind candy lollypops  
labeled Dulmex brand  
Bolirindo Source: Food  
and Drug Branch*

candy lollypops or sticks. Analysis of these wrappers, which some children chew on or lick, showed that they might contain between 21,000 to 22,000 parts per million (ppm) of lead. The lollypop sticks contain more than 400 ppm of lead and the candy contains

approximately .2 ppm of lead. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has recommended that children

under age 6 should consume on average no more than 6.0 micrograms of lead each day from all food sources.

The California Department of Health Services (CDHS) began investigating after the product was collected from the home of a child with a high blood lead level. The 2-year-old child, who lives in Orange County, was identified by a routine blood test for 2-year-olds. CDHS also is aware of cases involving two other children, both from Stanislaus County, who have high blood lead levels associated with consumption of this candy.

CDHS' Food and Drug Branch has embargoed all stock of the product at the only known California distributor and has notified the Jalisco, Mexico-based manufacturer, which is cooperating with DHS in its investigation. CDHS investigators also are working with FDA and local health departments to ensure that the product is no longer

being sold in California. The public is encouraged to report any sellers of the candy by calling CDHS' Complaint Hot Line at 1-800-495-3232.

Concerned parents whose children might have consumed these products should ask their doctor for a blood test that will detect levels of lead. For further information on lead poisoning, parents should contact their local childhood lead poisoning prevention program or local public health department. The California Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch at (510) 622-5000 has a list of these agencies.

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